

From: John Luongo
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/11/02 9:15pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom It May Concern,

The Court has established that Microsoft has a monopoly position. As such, its conduct is to be scrutinized to protect consumers. In the light of Microsoft's past behavior, we can expect minimal cooperation from Microsoft at best, and more likely, continued abuse. Microsoft's lack of candor at the trial was offensive, and I believe that it bodes poorly for their future conduct. As consumers, we need a remedy that is much stronger than that which was reached in the recent settlement.

One needs to look no further than Intel and AMD to see the effects of competition in the personal computer marketplace. The battle for consumers between these two competitors has two obvious benefits. First, lower prices. And second, more innovation.

Business and personal consumers need the same type of competition in software. I would like to choose to purchase my operating system from another vendor without having to switch to Linux or Apple. And I would like to have a greater choice of office productivity software as well.

Microsoft can market software that is bloated with features that I don't want or need, and it can force me to upgrade my licenses for Windows or Office when they decide it is no longer profitable for them to support. For example, if I decide to keep upgrading my computer indefinitely, at some point they can refuse to "activate" my software licenses. In effect, this forces me into a subscription mode. If I choose to use Office XP Professional ten years from now, I should not need Microsoft's "permission."

Microsoft's tactics bully both consumers, and other entrants to the marketplace. I wish market forces could remedy this imbalance. Because this is unlikely, we need a settlement or judgment that will protect end users from Microsoft's greed. We need your help.

While it may seem extreme, I believe that Microsoft should be forced to license the code for Windows and for office productivity software to competitors who are willing to pay an equitable fee. This will compensate Microsoft for their intellectual property, while allowing competitors to market products that appeal to segmented markets. One size does not fit all in the computer software marketplace.

There is a great irony in all this. Microsoft is an enormously talented competitor who, in the long term, would benefit more from healthy competition than from its present dominance.

